



News Release

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"The State Fire Marshal's Office Reminds Louisiana Residents to "Practice Your Escape Plan"

Baton Rouge, LA, October 2, 2007—It's time for Fire Prevention Week, and from October 7-13 The state fire marshal's office is joining forces with the nonprofit National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to remind local residents to 'Practice Your Escape Plan.' During this year's fire safety campaign, firefighters and safety advocates will be spreading the word about the dangers of home fires and teaching local residents how to plan and practice escape from a home in case a fire occurs.

According to the latest NFPA research, 3,030 people died in 2005 in home fires – that's roughly eight people every day. Being alerted to a fire and knowing what to do to escape from one are extremely important, yet only 23% of households have planned and practiced a home fire escape plan.

"Many times when we speak to residents who have experienced a fire in their home, they recall becoming confused and disoriented by the conditions and severity of the situation – but they realized they needed to get out fast," said State Fire Marshal Paul Smith. "Sometimes there are only seconds to escape, but there's no question that having a plan in place that has been practiced saves precious time and makes survival more likely. We hope that Fire Prevention Week will prompt folks in our community to plan and practice their escape."

Are you prepared for a fire? Although it's difficult to prepare for the unexpected, reviewing the information below and taking action based on it to plan for a fire is strongly recommended... and don't forget to practice your escape plan during Fire Prevention Week!

- Install working smoke alarms on every level; and inside and outside of each sleeping area.
- Develop a fire escape plan that identifies two ways out of each room and a family meeting place outside.
- Make sure your plan allows for any specific needs in your household. If everyone knows what to do, everyone can get out quickly.
- Practice using the plan, at least twice a year.
- Some studies have shown that some children and adults may not awaken to the sound of a smoke alarm; they may need help waking up.
- If the smoke alarm sounds: Go to your closest exit, and if you run into smoke, turn and use another way out. If you must exit through smoke, get low and go under the smoke to your exit. Don't take time to pick up belongings; just get out and help others get out. Move fast but stay calm.

Fire Prevention Week is actively supported by fire departments across the country. For 85 years fire departments have observed Fire Prevention Week, making it the longest running public health and safety observance on record.

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